

To the suppressors of Learning, and propagators of Ignorance,  
that are Members of the House of Commons.

*The humble Petition of the poore Poets of Great Britaine.*

**A**fter so many concurring Petitions  
From all ages, and sexes, and all conditions,  
We come in the reare, but are greatly afraid  
We shall want thanks, when our wishes are heard:  
But we hope for our labour we shall not be shent,  
For this comes from Christendom, & not frō Kent.  
Though set formes of prayer be abomination,  
Set formes of petitions, have found approbation:  
Therefore, as others from the bottome of their souls,  
So from the depth and bottome of our bowels  
According to the blessed forme thats taught us,  
We thanke you for the ills you have brought us:  
For the good we receive, we thank him that gave it  
And you for the confidence only to crave it.  
Next by course we complaine of the great violation  
Of priviledge, like the rest of our Nation  
But tis none of yours, of which we have spoken,  
Which never had being, untill they were broken.  
But ours is a priviledge, ancient and native,  
Hangs not on Ordinance, or power Legislative,  
And first tis to speake what ever we please  
Without feare of a prison, or Pursuivants fees:  
Next that we only may lie by authority,  
But in that also you have got the priority.  
Next an old custome, our fathers did name it  
Poeticall licence, and alwayes did claime it.  
By this wee have power, to change age into youth,  
True nonsense to sence, and falsehood to truth,  
In brieft to make good whatsoever is faultie;

This art some Poet, or the Divell, has taught yee,  
And this our property, you have invaded,  
And a priviledge of both Houses have made it,  
But that trust above all, in Poets reposed;  
That Kings by them only, are made and deposed.  
This though you cannot doe, yet you are willing;  
But when wee undertake, deposing or killing  
Their Tyrants and Monsters, and yet then the Poet  
Takes full revenge, on the villaines that doe it,  
And when we resume a Scepter, or a Crowne,  
We are modest, and seeke not to make it our owne;  
But ist not presumption, to write Verses to you,  
Who make the better Poems, of the two;  
For all those pritty knacks, you compose,  
Alas what are they but Poems in prose?  
And between those and ours, theres no difference;  
But that you want the rime, the wit, and the sence,  
But for lying, the most noble part of a Poet,  
You have it abundantly, and your selves know it.  
And though you are modest, and seeme to abhorre it;  
It has done you good service, and thanke God for it.  
Although the old maxime remains still in force  
A sanctified cause, must have a sanctified course,  
If poverty be a part of our trade,  
So far the whole Kingdome, you Poets have made,  
Nay even so far as undoing will doe it:  
You have made King *Charles* himselfe, a Poet;  
But provoke not his Muse, for all the world knowes  
Already you have had too much of his prose.

F I N I S.